

Sustainable Economy Working Group (“SEWG”)

Minutes of Wednesday Feb. 15, 2012 Meeting

1. **Present:** Mike Norman, Susan Labandibar, Estelle Record-Stanley, Jonathon Feinberg, Terra Friedrichs, Paul Bernstein
2. **Facilitating:** Susan & Mike
3. **Meet & Greet:** Two new attendees:
 - Jonathon Feinberg, Environmental activist and educator; Tufts urban-policy graduate student.
 - Terra Friedrichs, Original online convenor of this SEWG group; Business analyst & strategic planner.
4. **Report-backs and Announcements –**
 - **Worker-owned companies’** National Conference will be in Boston June 22-24 -- <http://usworker.coop/events/2012-national-worker-cooperative-conference> . For more info, write to our SEWG member Estelle Record-Stanley at record0606@yahoo.com
 - **“Democracy School”** – <http://celdf.org/section.php?id=6> . Trains people to pass town ordinances that **block undesired corporate actions** from occurring in their community. (Has been used in Pennsylvania against natural-gas drillers that would otherwise be polluting residents’ drinking water wells.) Might be usable in Somerville and nearby towns to block Walmart from establishing mega-stores that could result in closure of existing local businesses. For more info contact Terra at terraf@compuserve.com . (Also, a past attender of our SEWG, Jimi Twofeathers, has experience passing such an ordinance in Concord, MA → jim2f@gmail.com).
 - **“Social Enterprise Working Group”** – may get started through the energy of Elise Moussa, a business-owner and past attender of our SEWG → elise.moussa@gmail.com
5. **Direct Action: ‘Boycotts & Boycotts’** – In line with our mission to increase sustainable economy in the Greater Boston area, we developed further our strategy for mobilizing Occupy members and the general public to **direct their normal shopping towards member companies** of the Sustainable Business Network (www.somervillelocalfirst.org/campaigns/shift-your-shopping/ and <http://cambridgelocalfirst.org/business-directory/>), as well as to other businesses who are already certified as behaving in line with the Occupy values of positive impact on the Community, the Environment, and Employees.
 - a. As Susan explained in her Feb.19th message to all of you on this email list, we’re now inviting you to **please point out additional certifying organizations**, and place them on our new wiki at [http://wiki.occupyboston.org/wiki/Sustainable Economy Rating Groups](http://wiki.occupyboston.org/wiki/Sustainable_Economy_Rating_Groups) , so we can consider them at our upcoming meeting (Thursday March 1st – details on next page).
 - b. In order to encourage other businesses (who are not yet certified) to **make local development their high priority**, we decided to take advantage of the petition-and-pledge-gathering mechanism available on the “SoChange.Com” website – <http://sochange.com> .
6. **Direct Action: “Crowdfunding”** – In line with our mission to build a job-creating sharing economy, Mike reported on his recent visit to Washington DC, where he’d met with Senators and House Representatives, pressing for passage of a law to **remove Federal restrictions** that currently forbid us average folks from helping small local businesses do job creation. Details of that campaign are at www.wefunder.com
 - a. Specifically, the proposed law would allow small businesses to sell shares of stock to persons who can afford to buy as little as \$100 worth (whereas now the law requires the purchaser to have an income of at least \$250,000/year or to own assets of \$1 million (!).
 - b. One version of the law has **already passed** the House of Representatives -- <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/C?c112:/temp/~c1120CE5Cu> Now the Senate is considering a different version -- <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/C?c112:/temp/~c112zm7wei> .
 - c. **You can help** by signing the petition to our two Senators at www.wefunder.com .

- d. Three of the law's co-sponsors from Congress will be in Boston soon to work further with Mike and the "WeFunder" team.
- 7. **Energy Transition Research Team** – Wes was to report on this but didn't attend, so he may report on this other team's activities at our next meeting .
- 8. **Next Meeting – Thursday March 1 at 7:00pm**
at One Broadway, Cambridge (3rd Floor Conference Room). Cell-phone contact that day is Mike at (401) 477 3647 if you need help finding the place, or getting through any of the doors.
- 9. **Facilitators** for our next meeting – Susan and Mike